

# Dwight's Journal of Music.

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## Songs from the German.

Translated \* and adapted to the music of ROBERT FRANZ by J. S. D.

### I.

"AUS MEINEN GROSSEN SCHMERZEN."—H. Heine.

Out of my soul's great sadness  
My little songs go drifting,  
Their wings full of melody lifting,  
Away to Her heart with gladness.

They found her, and round her they hovered;  
—Now back flutter all, complaining,  
Complaining, yet ever disdainful  
To say what her heart discovered.

### II.

#### SLEEPER SONG.

("Schlummerlied"—L. Tieck.)

Rest thee, my Sweet, in the shadow  
Of the greenly glimmering grove;  
Soft sighth the grass on the meadow,  
Thou'rt fann'd and art cooled in the shadow,  
And watched by faithful love.  
Sleep then, sleep on  
'Neath the whispering pine,  
Dearest darling mine,  
Ever I'll be thine!

Hush ye! invisible chorus,  
Disturb not her dainty repose!  
The birds all, hovering o'er us,  
Suspend their bewildering chorus:  
Sleep, darling, thine eyelids close!  
Softly, O sleep!  
No noise near thee creep!  
Faithfullest watch I'll keep.

Murmur, melodies Elysian!  
Whisper low, thou purring stream!  
Charmed by some enchanting vision,  
Fall of all delights Elysian,  
She is smiling,  
Smiling in her happy dream!  
Through the whispering trees  
Little swarms of golden bees  
Keep  
Humming to lull thee asleep.

### III.

"WIE DES MONDES ABBILD ZITZT."—(H. Heine.)

As the Moon's pale image quivers  
In the water wav'ring wildly,  
She the while, serene and silent,  
Walks the sky so queenly mildly!

So too walkest thou, Belovèd,  
Sure and silent; and what quivers  
In my heart is but thine image:  
'Tis my own poor heart that shivers.

### IV.

#### EXPECTATION.

("Die Harrende."—W. Osterwald.)

Gaily a birdling singeth,  
And softly too sing I.  
Away and away it wingeth:  
O! had I wings to fly!

True, he hath sent no greeting,  
No promise he'll appear:  
It is my heart's quick beating  
That tells me he is near.

Blooming and brightly shining  
Is all the world without;  
And now there'll be no more pining,  
Away with ev'ry doubt!

My heart's with joy bells pealing,  
And Hope enters in thereby:  
To-day—O the blissful feeling!—  
Into mine arms he'll fly!

### V.

#### DARLING IS HERE!

("Liebchen ist da!"—J. Schroer.)

Look! little flow'rets,  
Look, and be glad!  
Stand not so speechless,  
Stand not so sad.  
O wist what I saw, so clear:  
Darling is here, is here!

They shiver'd and shook,  
Looked shyly about,  
With silvery tinkle  
They set up a shout,  
Went thrilling far and near:  
Darling is here! is here!

### VI.

#### HIS COMING.

("Er ist gekommen."—Rückert.)

Wild was the day when  
He came with greeting,  
Wildly toward him  
My heart was beating.  
Ah! blissful morning!  
Strange, only warning  
Of our two ways  
Divinely meeting!

Wild was the day, and  
The rain was beating,  
He won my heart by  
His look and greeting.  
Nay, 'twas no wooing,  
'Twas Fate's own doing:  
E're eyes had met,  
Our souls were meeting!

Dark was the day of  
His coming and greeting!  
Days may be dark and  
The roses fleeting;  
No longer he's near me!  
Yet faith shall cheer me,  
His heart to mine  
Still truly beating.

### VII.

"STERNE MIT DEN GOLDNEN FUSSCHEN."—(H. Heine.)

Stars with little golden feetlet  
Softly move and dim their light,  
Lest the sleeping Earth they waken  
In the downy lap of Night.

List'ning stand the woods around me,  
Ev'ry leaflet owns the charm,  
And the mountain, dreaming yonder,  
Stretches out his shadowy arm.

Ah! what music!—Tuneful echoes  
Linger all along the vale.  
'Tis the voice of my Belovèd!  
—Or was that the nightingale?

## Mozart's Letters.\*

From the London Athenæum.

The writer to come of "Lives of the Musicians" stands in a better case than the biographer of a past generation. It seems to have been taken for granted that composers, instrumental players, and singers, led lives without incident, that they were coarse, illiterate, incapable of anything beyond sensual enjoyments,—unfit for commerce with the intelligent, the gifted and the good; only fit, in brief, to be made a show of, and to tumble for the delectation of the rich and vacant. The documents, however, which have here come to light during the last thirty years, tend to establish another story, and to rectify a misunderstanding,—ascribable in part to calumny, in part to bigotry, but in part, also, to ignorance. During some years of research—undertaken without the slightest pretext or desire of maintaining a theory, a conviction has grown upon us, that, as men of intellect, accomplishment, and society, the great musicians have been very much underrated. Their lives, which of late years have issued from the press, and in which, for the first time, something of collection of facts has been attempted, are all calculated, more or less, to ratify the experience of some intercourse with the best of the class, here and elsewhere. For instance, when we came into the world of Music, the theory of "inspired idiocy" was still in force in England. This Mozart, whose letters are under notice, was pitied as a sort of wonderful helpless baby in all the affairs of life, "who could not cut his own meat." Such a false notion is not yet altogether exploded. The time and the circumstances of his death, the temporary apathy into which these seem to have thrown his survivors (who, in their bewilderment, could not point out the grave which held the remains of so great a genius,) the disorder of his affairs enormously magnified,—may have favored the growth of such an opinion, and have prevented that early accumulation of facts and materials, which, if once postponed, can never be compensated for. But every subsequent disinterment of information and relic has brightened the picture, by bringing us nearer the truth. We fancy the subject not yet exhausted, because we do not conceive this collection of letters to be complete, and imagine that from the books of Nissen, Dr. Jahn's four most oppressive volumes, and Dr. von Köchel's thematic catalogue, a biography might still be produced by one familiar with the anecdotal tales of life in Vienna and Paris at the close of the last century, which would set before us the traveller, the son, the lover and the husband, more distinctly and advantageously than he has yet figured. How is it that when composing a picture out of scattered traits, *indicia*, or recollections, our Germans are so far behind their neighbors?—that while they can accumulate, with a patience we should do well to emulate, any amount of facts, they seem so much wanting in that life and spirit which are indispensable to the writers of memoirs?

\* The Letters of Wolfgang Mozart, 1780-1792. Translated from the collection of Ludwig Nohl, by Lady Wallace. With a portrait and fac-simile. 2 vols. Longmans & Co. Announced in New York, by Harpers, and by Hurd & Houghton.

\* These translations were made for Ditson's edition of the Franz songs and are copy-right.

It has long been clear that Mozart's father was a man far superior in understanding and conduct to many of the grasping parents to whom wonderful children are born; and this in spite of the pressure of circumstances. Nothing, it is obvious, could be worse calculated to inspire probity and the cultivation of good morals than the average position of the German musician who had anything to do with German courts and nobles at the close of the eighteenth century. Advancement was only to be gained by ante-chamber work, solicitation and intrigue. The best places of trust and profit were mostly in the hands of foreigners. The amount of jealousy and complaint current could hardly be over-stated. Manners and morals were alike gross. The slavery so much anathematized by sentimental persons, which the Mozarts had to endure as household musicians to the Prince Archbishop of Salzburg, does not appear to have been so much the exception as the rule. Take a picture of manners showing how the art of music could be patronized by German persons professing liberality of taste and some distinction of position:

OCT. 17, 1777.

"I will now (writes Mozart to his father) relate to you as briefly as possible the Augsburg history to which I have already alluded. Herr von Fingerle, who sent his compliments to you, was also at Herr Graf's. The people were very civil, and discussed the concert I proposed to give, all saying, 'It will be one of the most brilliant concerts ever given in Augsburg. You have a great advantage in having made the acquaintance of our Stadtpfleger Langenmantl; besides, the name of Mozart has much influence here.' So we separated mutually pleased. I must now tell you that Herr von Langenmantl, Jr., when at Herr Stein's, said that he would arrange a concert in the Stube (as something very select and complimentary to me), for the nobility alone. You can't think with what zeal he spoke, and promised to undertake. We agreed that I should call on him the next morning for the answer; accordingly I went; this was on the 13th. He was very polite, but said that as yet he could not say anything decided. I played there again for an hour, and he invited me the next day, the 14th, to dinner. In the forenoon he sent to beg that I would come to him at eleven o'clock, and bring some pieces with me, as he had asked some of the professional musicians, and they intended to have some music. I immediately sent some music, and went myself at eleven, when, with many lame excuses, he coolly said, 'By-the-bye, I could do nothing about the concert; O! I was in such a rage yesterday on your account. The patrician members of the Casino said that their cashbox was at a very low ebb, and that you were not the kind of virtuoso who could expect a *souverein d'or*.' I merely smiled, and said, 'I quite agree with them.' N.B.—he is Intendant of Music in the Casino, and the old father a magistrate! but I cared very little about it. We sat down to dinner; the old gentleman also dined up-stairs with us, and was very civil, but did not say a word about the concert. After dinner I played two concertos, something out of my head, and then a trio of Hafeneder's on the violin. I would gladly have played more, but I was so badly accompanied that it gave me the colic. He said to me, good-naturedly, 'Don't let us part company to-day; go to the play with us, and return here to supper. We were all very merry. When we came back from the theatre, I played again till we went to supper. Young Langenmantl had already questioned me in the forenoon about my cross (Mozart, by his father's desire, wore the 'Order of the Golden Spur,' conferred on him by the Pope), and I told him exactly how I got it, and what it was.

"He and his brother-in-law said over and over again, 'Let us order a cross, too, that we may be on a par with Herr Mozart.' I took no notice of this. They also repeatedly said, 'Hullo! you sir! Knight of the Spur!' I said not a word; but during supper it became really too bad. 'What may it have cost? three ducats? must you have permission to wear it? Do you pay extra for leave to do so? We really must get

one just like it.' An officer there, of the name of Bach, said, 'For shame! what would you do with the cross?' That young ass, *Kurzen Mantl* winked at him, but I saw him, and he knew that I did. A pause ensued, and then he offered me snuff, saying, 'There, show that you don't care a pinch of snuff for it. I still said nothing. At length he began once more in a sneering tone: 'I may then send to you to-morrow, and you will be so good as to lend me the cross for a few minutes, and I will return it immediately after I have spoken to the goldsmith about it. I know that when I ask him its value, (for he is a queer kind of a man) he will say a Bavarian *thaler*; it can't be worth more, for it is not gold, only copper, ha! ha!' I said, 'By no means—it is lead, ha! ha!' I was burning with anger and rage. 'I say,' rejoined he, 'I suppose I may, if need be, leave out the spur?' 'Oh, yes,' said I, 'for you have one already in your head; I, too, have one in mine, but of a very different kind, and I should be sorry to exchange mine for yours; so there, take a pinch of snuff on that!' and I offered him snuff. He became pale with rage, but began again: 'Just now that order looked so well on that grand waistcoat of yours.' I made no reply, so he called the servant and said, 'Hallo! you must have greater respect for my brother-in-law and myself when we wear the same cross as Herr Mozart: take a pinch of snuff on that!' I started up; all did the same, and showed great embarrassment. I took my hat and my sword, and said, 'I hope to have the pleasure of seeing you to-morrow.' 'To-morrow I shall not be here.' 'Well, then, the next morning, when I shall still be here.' 'Ho, ho!' you surely don't mean to —' 'I mean nothing; you are a set of bores, so good night,' and off I went.

"Next day I told the whole story to Herr Stein, Herr Geniaux, and to Herr Director Graf—I don't mean about the cross, but how highly disgusted I was at their having bragged so much about a concert, and now it had come to nothing. 'I call this making a fool of a person and leaving him in the lurch. I am very sorry that I ever came here. I could not possibly have believed that in Augsburg, my papa's native town, such insult could have been offered to his son.' You cannot imagine, dear papa, how angry and indignant these three gentlemen were, saying: 'Oh, you must positively give a concert here; we don't stand in need of the patricians.' I, however, adhered to my resolution and said, 'I am willing to give a small farewell-concert at Herr Stein's, for my few kind friends here who are *connoisseurs*.' The Director was quite distressed, and exclaimed: 'It is abominable—shameful; who could have believed such a thing of Langenmantl! *Par Dieu!* if he really wished it, no doubt it would have been carried through.' We then separated. The Director went down stairs with me in his dressing-gown as far as the door, and Herr Stein and Geniaux walked home with me. They urged us to make up our mind to stay here for a time, but we remained firm. I must not forget to say that, when young Langenmantl lisped out to me, in his usual cool, indifferent way, the pleasant news as to my concert, he added that the patricians invited me to their concert next Thursday. I said, 'I will come as one of the audience.' 'Oh, we hope you will give us the pleasure of hearing you play also.' 'Well, perhaps I may; why not?' But having received so grievous an insult the next evening, I resolved not to go near him again, to steer clear of the whole set of patricians, and to leave Augsburg.

"During dinner, on the 16th, I was called out by a servant-maid of Langenmantl's, who wished to know whether he might expect me to go with him to the concert? and he begged I would come to him immediately after dinner. I sent my compliments in return, that I had no intention of going to the concert; nor could I come to him, as I was already engaged (which was quite true); but that I would call next morning to take leave of him, as on Saturday next, at furthest, I was to leave Augsburg. In the mean time Herr Stein had been to see the other patricians of the Evangelical party, and spoke so strongly to them that these gentlemen were quite excited. 'What!

said they, 'shall we permit a man who does us so much honor to leave this place without even hearing him? Herr von Langenmantl, having already heard him, thinks that is enough.' At last they became so excited that Herr *Kurzenmantl*, the excellent youth, was obliged to go to Herr Stein himself to entreat him, in the name of the patricians, to do all in his power to persuade me to attend the concert, but to say that I must not expect great things. At last I went with him, though with considerable reluctance.

"The principal gentlemen were very polite, particularly Baron Belling, who is a director or some such animal; he opened my music portfolio himself. I brought a symphony with me, which they played, and I took a violin part. The orchestra is enough to throw any one into fits. That young puppy Langenmantl was all courtesy, but his face looked as impertinent as ever; he said, 'I was rather afraid you might have escaped us, or been offended by our jokes the other evening.' 'By no means,' said I, coolly; 'you are still very young; but I advise you to be more cautious in future, for I am not accustomed to such jokes. The subject on which you were so facetious did you no credit, nor did it answer your purpose, for you see I still wear the order; you had better have chosen some other topic for your wit.' 'I assure you,' said he, 'it was only my brother-in-law who —' 'Let us say no more about it,' said I. 'We had nearly been deprived of the pleasure of seeing you altogether,' he rejoined. 'Yes; had it not been for Herr Stein, I certainly should not have come; and, to tell you the truth, I am only here now to prevent you Augsburg gentlemen being the laughing-stock of other countries, which would have been the case if I had told them that I was eight days in the city where my father was born, without any one there taking the trouble to hear me!' I played a concerto, and all went off well, except the accompaniment; and as a finale I played a sonata. At the close, Baron Belling thanked me in the warmest manner in the name of all the company; and, begging me to consider only their good will, presented me with two ducats."

In a subsequent letter it appears that Leopold Mozart disapproved of the moderate amount of spirit shown to this insolent young puppy by his son. Throughout the correspondence, from the tone of remonstrance again and again employed by the genius, it is evident that the father was prudent, but somewhat formal and timid; his eyes ever affectionately and proudly fixed on his son's fame and honor. Owing to the weight of his counsels, Wolfgang was rescued from a disastrous marriage, or what must have been more disastrous still, a *liaison* with Aloysia Weber. He was tardy in according his consent to the step which subsequently united Mozart to her younger sister, and we cannot help suspecting, not without some grounds.

The Webers, beside musical genius, had wild blood in their veins. The husband of *Staneri* (the wife's familiar Vienna name) was anything, if all tales are true, but immaculate;—given to roving and dissipation, though (as the mass of labor he accomplished would alone have sufficed to attest) anything but a shiftless libertine. But even Wolfgang had occasion to reprove his betrothed for some coarseness of behavior which had made her lightly spoken of. There may have been more than we have been told which came to the ears of the anxious father. The household of the married pair has been described as Arcadian in its happiness; but the strange, forlorn deathbed of the man of genius, and his hurried burial in a nameless grave, suggest that the wife, however gay as a companion, had few of the qualities which *wear* well in the hour of adversity. Nor, in juxtaposition with the apocryphal story of her having shared his vigil when the overture to "Don Giovanni" was dashed down on paper, can we avoid pointing out a fact which implies imperfect sympathy as well as imperfect knowledge, in what most concerned the artist's well-being. The confusion in which Mozart's manuscripts were found may doubtless be ascribed to the dismay of so fearful and sudden a catastrophe as his death; but had his widow been the



partner of his joys and sorrows we have been invited to believe her, when the time of emerging from her bitter distress came, she must have been able to throw the light of authentication on many points never now to be wholly cleared up. The "Requiem" controversy, for instance, could hardly have happened save by Constance Mozart's connivance or indifference.

One thing in these letters of Mozart, as in those of Mendelssohn, must strike every reader as excellent and endearing;—not so much his keen, as his loving, appreciation of all that had been well done in Art by others than himself. When Mendelssohn was the worst beset in Berlin by the pestilential gossip of the Prussian capital, with its backbitings, and imputations of meanness, he had truth and manhood in him to recommend the conducting of Spontini, who was represented as his substantial enemy, as a thing by itself in its fire and brilliancy, which must be heard. And so it was with Mozart. He adored Handel; he could learn from Bach; he could praise, honestly, music by Holzbauer, now defunct. The exception which proves the rule occurs with him when dealing with as great a piano-forte-composer as himself,—Clementi. That Italian master never, so far as we are aware, wrote *Concerto* music; but Clementi's *Sonatas* stand among *Sonatas* where Cherubini's overtures do among overtures. The best have a truth, a science, and a grandeur which are "of all time." They are the only works of their kind which can be heard with—we dare even say *after*—Beethoven's. Can one say as much of Mozart's? And it is curious—his contempt for the man being such as he expressed—that one of these very condemned *Sonatas* should have furnished the theme of that very "Zauberflöte" overture, before which, we were the other day told, that the organ-fugues of Bach "pale" as with so much "ineffectual fire."

This book is welcome; and (without having collated it with the original German) Lady Wallace is to be praised as having rendered it into readable English.

### The Theatres and the Opera.

(From the Springfield Republican.)

NEW YORK, December 23, 1865.

#### THE THEATRES VS. THE HERALD.

New York has waked up to find itself without an opera, and this abhorred musical vacuum will continue for six weeks, good Bostonians comforting themselves with as many melodious crumbs as can be thrown at them in the space of a fortnight. The success of the late operatic season has been unparalleled in the history of Maretzek's management, who, according to Mr. On Dit, has cleared \$40,000! This, too, independently of that moral support from the *Herald*, without which no place of amusement, six months ago, was supposed to live, or move, or in any way have its being. It required a gigantic rebellion and a stupendous national debt to prove that cotton was not king. It required a no less gigantic rebellion among managers, led by the clever and indefatigable Max, to prove that the *Herald* is no longer king. "From the New York Herald, good Lord deliver us!" was the managerial litany chanted honestly and triumphantly. Very glad are we that theatres are emancipating themselves from the galling and demoralizing yoke heretofore imposed upon them by newspapers, and very encouraging is it to see that the public, up to a certain point, are able to think for themselves. To believe in a musical or theatrical criticism, nowadays, is a remnant of superstition visible only among the very young or the very confiding. Very edifying is it to take up playbill after playbill and read the affecting announcement that "this place of amusement does not advertise in the New York Herald;" very suggestive, too, of a moral is it to look at the *Herald's* amusement column and gaze upon a beggarly account of empty benches. Of course "The Play Bill," a very clever protégé of the *Herald*, widely circulated in the theatres, no longer exists. It has been supplanted by "The Stage," which in no way compares with its predecessor.

#### CRISPINO E LA COMARE.

Looking back upon the recent opera season recalls the late lamented buffo, Rovere, to whom we owe the introduction of a new comic opera, "Crispino e la Comare," (the cobbler and the fairy) by the brothers

Ricci. It was astonishing to see the gray-haired Rovere, of sixty-five, singing and acting with all the vivacity and agility of thirty, when thirty is very clever? Poor fellow! In amusing the public he dug his own grave. Not being able to find his carriage at the conclusion of the last representation of *Crispino e la Comare*, he walked home in an overheated condition and died of diphtheria two days after. It is the province of the superstitious to record coincidences; yet, without being superstitious, there is that about Rovere's death which, taken in connection with *Crispino*, has struck me as being singular, to say the least. In the last act the fairy conducts *Crispino* to her abode, supposed to be a department of the infernal regions; there the cobbler sees a number of crystal vases, in each of which a flame is burning with various degrees of brightness, one being nearly extinguished. "Is this an illumination?" asks *Crispino*. "No," replies the fairy, "these are my registers; each flame represents a human life." At this *Crispino* becomes curious, and inquires into the personality of each flame. Finally he comes to one which he is told represents his wife. "How beautiful it burns!" he exclaims; "but where's mine?"

Fairy—"Tis this one."  
*Crispino*—"Oh dear! Oh dear! it's nearly out."  
 Fairy—"Thy vices have led thee to a premature end."

*Crispino*—"Let's take a little oil from my wife's lamp. Methinks she has too much."

The cobbler is about to perform this little act of unselfishness, when the lights are extinguished by the fairy. Two nights later, Rovere's light was extinguished by a fate more unrelenting than the fairy of the opera.

#### A FUNERAL MASS.

Rovere died poor, and, with that generosity which is a peculiar characteristic of the dramatic profession a subscription was immediately taken up among the artists for the benefit of his widow. A grand mass for the repose of his soul was also celebrated, last Sunday, at Father Cumming's church in Twenty-eighth street. We went in all seriousness of spirit, and came away feeling that we had assisted at a very bad theatrical performance. Yes, it was particularly bad; rather more heartless than any funeral spectacle we had ever seen in Italy. A *bon vivant* droned through the service, and the music, for the most part out of time and tune, was of the earthiest description. Several artists assisted in selections from Rossini's "Stabat Mater," Mazzoleni singing the grand tenor aria of "Cujus Animam" and Antonucci delivering the "Pro Peccatis;" and though their rendering of each was tolerable, yet the character of the music is so intensely operatic that one instinctively smells the foot-lights, whereby all religious feeling is destroyed. It is certainly true that Italians generally do not understand sacred music, and it is also certainly true that one rarely hears anything but jigs in the Catholic churches of New York. There is no practical necessity to praise the musical abominations one has to endure in Protestant churches, but at all events they attempt to be devotional, and if singers have any feeling, which occasionally happens, the religious element may be brought out. The modern mass is merely bastard opera, and not long since we were "played out of the house" to a lively air from "Martha." Surely we pitied poor Rovere's soul that it required such mumbling and such singing to get to heaven! Requiescat in pace.

#### L'AFRICAIN.

Of "L'Africain," Meyerbeer's posthumous opera, the least said is the better, although a great deal has been and can still be said on this subject. There are people who actually enjoy bad music played on an old tin pan, or its equivalent. There are persons who enjoy what they do not understand; and therefore there are those who honestly like "L'Africain." Some, overpowered by the name of Meyerbeer, say they like it. They are such as always praise whatever has a reputation. Then there are affected men and women, in and out of fashion (but generally in) who indulge in a spasmodic enthusiasm whenever "L'Africain" is mentioned. "Oh, it is superb," exclaimed a would-be musical exquisite the other day. "There never was anything like it." This at least is true; there never was anything like it. "But," interposed a listener who had not yet heard the opera, "there are people who hold quite a different opinion." "Indeed," replied the exquisite, "then they are dunderheads. None but dunderheads can fail to appreciate L'Africain." "Then behold a dunderhead," retorted a very fine musician, stepping forward. The exquisite retired in disorder before the well-aimed fire of the enemy. Ask musicians what they think of "L'Africain," and shaking of heads and shrugging of shoulders will be the response of the majority. Of course there are fine passages in it, and some noble

concerted pieces; nothing of Meyerbeer's can be entirely devoid of merit. Tennyson, the poet laureate, could afford to write "Enoch Arden." Meyerbeer, the composer of "The Huguenots," could afford to compose "L'Africain;" but Tennyson would never have obtained his laurels had he only written his last poem. Meyerbeer would never have had the entrée of the Grand Opera at Paris had "L'Africain" been without predecessors. With all the magnificence of dresses and scenery, with all the support of first-class artists, and with all the melancholy interest surrounding the unfinished work of a great man just dead, Paris has exhibited no enthusiasm. The circumstances of its production merely disarmed criticism for the time being.

#### HOW MEYERBEER COMPOSED.

There is to be said, and it is saying a great deal, that Meyerbeer had not declared "L'Africain" to be ready for the stage, and no one that has any knowledge of Meyerbeer's method of composing can believe that he would have produced it in its present condition. There was no end to his revisions. He often revised so elaborately as to leave nothing of the original intention remaining. Nor did he ever take any one into his confidence. Seated on a high stool before a high desk, he wrote, and wrote, and wrote, never going to the piano, so a friend of his tells me. After his day's work, the manuscript was put back into the desk and carefully locked up. Nor until an opera was completed to his own satisfaction, would Meyerbeer show it. Is it then just to regard "L'Africain" as a work after its composer's own heart? Probably the poor man's ghost is suffering the torments of numberless purgatories at this most unwarrantable liberty taken with his undeveloped ideas. If Meyerbeer has any enemies, it is a sweet revenge they are now enjoying at seeing him for the first time in diabolical. The mysteries of the toilet do wonders for some people.

"L'Africain," as brought out in this country, is but a suggestion of its possibilities. Neither artists nor mise en scene do justice to the opera, although Maretzek has taken as much pains with its production as could be expected. In America there is no power behind the manager to supply the deficiencies of an exhausted treasury. Still, Maretzek could procure better singers than we are treated to in "L'Africain," and in another year they should be forthcoming. The plot of the opera is the worst that ever was conceived. In this case Scribe has become a Pharisee!

STRAWES, JR.

(From the London Orchestra.)

### My Experiences of England and the English.

BY MYSELF.

#### NO. VI.—MY OPERA.

It was come to pass, during that I a waif and wanderer on the hospitable shore of England wandered, that I should an opera write. In this proceeding am I a by-a-no-means-exceptionwise instance of profession-fertility in music-writing. How many times many of your musicians have operas written! I speak not from your great composer—from your Balf, your Vallis, your Benedict (he is of us Germans), your Schmart, your Henryslicke, your Mack-farn, and so wider: these same have naturally-wise many great works achieved. But I speak from your littler artists—what you would call your Smallfry. The Smallfry of the profession are thereto throughout addicted, that they operas compose. In no case do I know a friend-musician, without from him the experience to have made, that he somewhere or other a manuscript opera in the pocket hidden has.

So it was quite and perfect a natural circumstance that I also should do my opera. I had myself shamed before the face of the musical world, if I, as German, had not done so much for art than you, who are ignorant English stupid-heads, boast yourselves to achieve. I resolved to myself that I would no longer consent to place myself in the stand described by Shakespeare—would no longer remain

"A flour borne to blush obscene  
 And waite its weakness on the dessert here."

No, I cried, I will to the work! I will prove that Germany is not doom to defeat from English barbarism. Never shall its eclecticismus yield to soleicismus: never its idealismus be constrained by vandalismus. This will I do, with enthusiasmus, and despite of rheumatismus.

I set to the work—or, as you English would say, I pegged away. The labor at which away I first pegged, was to get a Textbook—or, as you with Italian word-borrowing univention wise call it, a Libretto. And first to find the Boet. The same was soon found,

though I did not take the first that came to the hand. Not your Temysohn, nor your Braunig, nor your Amerikanisch Longpellow, nor your Schweinborn, nor yet the Boet Lorette, namely Tupper. None of these would I. Rather chose I a Boet which I knew, and which drove a profitless business in selling foreign newspapers and copying law-papers, handwritten dramas, and music-scores, in Princes-street, Leicester Square.

He was not a foreigner, though he sold foreign journals and polyglot dictionaries. He could speak no language but his own, which was Soho. But in that he had for many years lived there, and that therefore was himself with foreign elements mixed up, so had he a warm regard for the Square-surrounding nationalities; and with the Germans was particularly with sympathetic inlyfeelingfulness bound up.

He had likewise a sympathy for the oriental poetry of the Morningland, owing to the vicinity of the Alhambra. To him therefore, as to a the-other-comprehending participator in art-longing, I went.

The subject of our opera, as we soon settled, must be German, and thus mytisch and mysteriös. So much have I seen of your commonplace of English materialism, that I would nothing of that. What is your "*Helvellyn*," your "*Rose of Castle*," your "*Robbing Wood*," your "*Maritana*?" They are commonplace. What is your last debutant as English tenor? He is Cummings-place. True your "*Zig-eimerin*" (or Bohemian girl) is at least more to proper taste; and your "*Lurline*" would be at least German but is spoilt—ah, how she is spoilt! Yet am I tired of ordinary subjects: I would invent one for me myself.

So with my Boet, whose name was Robinssohn, we hit upon an interesting textbook. This was the Blot of opera: "The two families of Bangenschreckenstein and Wilderkaterfels have been at war since A.D. 772, at which time the Landmarkgraf von Wilderkaterfels caused the Erblicher Stiefelknecht of the Roman Empire, who was a Bangenschreckenstein, to be flayed alive and then sent home in a dog-cart, for having offered the Landmarkgraf mustard with mutton—an indignity which the haughty noble could not brook. Hence arose a feud between the two houses, which lasted for several centuries. At the opening of our story the house of Wilderkaterfels has come under the protection of the Yellow Pussy of the Riesengebirge—a wild and weirdlike being, who changes at will from an old woman to a Demon Cat, and divides her time equally between Whist in one character and Mice in the other. In the eyes of this feline witch all cats are sacred. Pleased with the conduct of a young scion of the house of Wilderkaterfels, who in a moment of infant compassion rescued from a watery grave a family of blind and helpless kittens, she has conferred on him and his the especial presence and guardianship of the Cats, with the promise that his castle shall be renowned and feared throughout Germany for the number of these animals within its walls. The prophecy has been fulfilled, and the castle swarms with cats. The young Landmarkgraf has grown up and died, leaving a son, an impetuous youth, who secretly and against the injunction of the Pope has sent his carte to the eldest daughter of the Bangenschreckenstein. A mutually acknowledged love is the result of this indiscretion, but the Fräulein von Bangenschreckenstein steadily refuses to consent to a marriage, owing to her antipathy to the faithful guardians of her lover's house, asserting that not only are they as a race noisy at night, but they support animal life extraneous to their own. All her lover can urge fails to combat her objections, and a quarrel between the lovers ensues, and terminates in her boxing the Landmarkgraf's ears and entering a convent.

"The distracted Landmarkgraf now appeals to the Pope for a dispensation to do something, but the Pope won't. Driven to madness by the refusal, and worried by the persistent row of the oldest Tortoiseshell of the family, who has occupied a turret rampart for several nights running and can't be driven away, the furious Landmarkgraf, forgetting his responsibilities, loads a culverin and deliberately shoots THE CAT!

"Instant and all but overwhelming ruin follows. The wrathful guardians of the Wilderkaterfels betake themselves, wildly crying for vengeance, to their patron—the Yellow Pussy of the Riesengebirge. The witch swears ample revenge; and at the moment of her volcanic descent in a storm of thunder and snow, the adherents of the inimical Bangenschreckenstein are seen winding their way along the chartered banks of the Rhine to attack the Castle of Wilderkaterfels, with the intention of burning it to the ground. The Landmarkgraf is unarmed and an orphan, and his agony is aggravated by the reflection that he is not insured. But at the moment of destruction means of safety are at hand. A faithful Tabby, who has remained constant to the house in which she has passed many hap-

py hours, and has refused to follow the exodus of her tribe, is discovered with kittens in the meat-safe. Round the neck of one of the new-born innocents an ancient retainer finds a medallion attached, and this when exposed to a solution of Ferrocyanide of Potassium discovers a SECRET CYPHER, warranting the deposition of the Pope, the abolition of convents throughout Germany, and an *auto da fe* against the Yellow Pussy. Joy is once more established, and while the lovers are united by special license, the Cats return placidly to their former home, and are greeted with an universal Invocation to the Mews."

This was my Blot in the language of the Boet who wrote it; this also was the argument which it was by us intended should go before the text in the textbook of the opera. Need I to add how much in character-voice with the in-every-way-idiosyncratic story was the music which was by me composed? Scarcely need I so to add; yet will I give one assurance. The musical handling of the opera was worth-full.

In a certain while it was all accomplished. My opera was full-ended. I took him to a publisher, an over-generous man, and the over-generous man bought him out of hand. I am not in a stand to open bare to you the name of that goodliest friend of me, who bought the property-right of my "*Patron Cats*," for so was the opera named. Why can I not open bare to you his name? Because when he had accepted my offer he said to me with quivering quavers in the voice, "Blechhausen, my dear boy, don't mention that I have bought this of you; it might damage my reputation. The remark was kurios, but perhaps it was a commerce-instinct, and commerce-instincts are not in the sphere of artistic belongings, and I understand them not. Therefore without to enquire, I promise him the promise not to mention his name. Shall I break my blighted word? Never will I diverge so secret a sacred!

The next thing was to get the "*Patron Cats*" performed, and with this object-fulfilment in the mind I directed myself to a certain Gompany, which was a Gompany for opera. I will not say it was the English Opera Gompany Limited, but only that it was a Gompany for opera. I wrote to the Manager of this institution a fine greeting, and might I be so free, myself to him in a personal interview to recommend? To this came a reply that the Manager sent compliments and would be glad to see me call.

He saw me call, since I went. He was a very polite gentleman with easy manners and easy chairs. He was engaged in a great deal of writing—perhaps scores of unperformed works: but he received me with urban dissimilitude.

In my best knowledge of English idioms I told him my business which he should mind. I said I wished him to produce my opera.

"Ah," said the manager, "the old story I see."

"Not so," replied I with indignation, "the story is quite new and original, and peculiar fits for the lyric stage." (This last was a phrase I had learnt from newspapers, which say each text-book is peculiar fits for the lyric stage.)

"You want your work brought out shortly, I suppose?" said the manager. "You see we are a good deal hampered just now."

I looked for the hampers, but they were not in the office; so I thought, "Perhaps he means they are for picnics outside."

"If I were to submit your proposal to the Board—"

"Pardon," I interrupted; "what are Board?"

"The word, M. Blechhausen, has two significations in the operative world. In the plural number it means the dramatic substratum on which a great work is produced; in the singular number the power which produces it."

"Then," said I, "I will all the both."

"If, as I was about to observe, I submitted the matter to our Board, they would doubtless be influenced by the amount of pecuniary support you would be prepared to extend to the venture."

This confused me somewhat erringly. "But," I cried, "what are pecuniary support? I give my work, which itself is pecuniary support to you, if good; and if bad what pecuniary support can you have?"

"The Gompany, M. Blechhausen, look to be insured somewhat against the chance of failure."

"There are offices for insurance," I reply: "I am not an office."

"You mistake me. Allowing we were ourselves convinced of the excellence of your work, that persuasion would not suffice to defray the cost of putting it on the stage."

"And who is to defray the cost then?"

"Well," returned the manager, "the Gompany would expect you, or the proprietor of your opera, to substantiate your interest by venturing a certain sum on its production."

"You mean," I asked astonished, "that I am to pay you for the liberty to use my opera and fill your theatre! So lies the hare in pepper?"

"Not exactly *pay* in the strict sense of the term," he answered, smiling, "but we should expect you to take up debentures to the extent of say five hundred pounds. In the event of success your money would be recoverable before payment of the shareholders' dividend."

"I know nothing of your debentures and your dividends," I cry out for "these are idiotisms of commerce, and are not art; but this I know, that you profess to be a Gompany to encourage the opera, and you are only a Gompany to encourage the pocket. Your professions are only a cloak—a mere opera-cloak. You would put on the stage the vilest trash for the sake of Debentures and Dividends. Where is your encouragement of the native talent?"

"Oh pickles!" exclaimed the Manager.

"I know not Bickles," I replied. "He may be your Chairman, or he may be your patron, but Bickles I know not and Bickles I will not!" So I left him in his office sitting, and went with rage in my heart to my over-generous publisher.

"Sir," I said to that too goodly man, "the Gompany will that we take Debentures for our opera and pay them five hundred pounds."

"My boy," said the friendly spirit, "it's not to be thought of."

"But the opera, my kind sir, the opera?"

"My boy," said again the never-too-much-to-be-overestimated business-man, "the less said about your opera the better."

"The less the better!" I repeated.

"Yes," he replied with tears in his eye-winks; "I have looked over the score, and I think so. The less we speak of that work the greater the comfort for you and for me—especially me."

## Music Abroad.

LEIPZIG.—Schumann's C major Symphony (No. 2) and two *entr'actes* to the tragedy "*Rosamunde*" (Koerner) by Schubert, together with Bach's G major Concerto for stringed instruments and soli by Fräulein Savanny, from the theatre, formed the programme of the 7th Abonnement-Concert on the 16th November. The performance of the instrumental works was, on the whole, brisk and lively. However, to enter into detail, I may remark that the clearness of tone and precision of the string instruments was not quite on a level with that of former times. Schumann's Symphony, one of the most beautiful works of this master, the result of direct penetration into the gigantic forms of Beethoven's muse, was given in an almost faultless manner.

Of the two *entr'actes* by Schubert, I think I am not mistaken, comparing the thematic contents with the drama itself, in asserting that the first number, of a tender, almost painful expression, is more suited as an introduction to the second act, whereas the second number, worked out in a masterly polyphonic manner, opening with a grand march (entry of the queen) and then gradually rising to the point where she (the queen) poisons herself, is more suited to Act V. This superb composition of the by far not sufficiently well-known and appreciated Vienna master, was a novelty for our audience, and did not fail to produce the deepest impression.

Fräulein Savanny gave a Recitative and Air from "*Idomeneo*," as also "*Erster Verlust*" (Goethe-Mendelssohn) and "*Gretchen am Spinnrade*" (Goethe-Schubert.) Her voice is pleasing, and of a pathetic tone; however, in the lower notes it is occasionally husky and would seem to have lost its former freshness. Her rendering of the "*Lieder*" was distinct and clear, whereas in the recitative and air she was less successful.

In the very interesting concert (No. 3) of the Euterpe Verein, on the 21st inst., two orchestral works of still-living composers were produced—viz: Symphony C major (No. 1), S. Jadassohn, who is one of the most distinguished of Leipzig's musicians, and prelude to "*Tristan und Isolde*"—Richard Wagner. The former work, which was given some years since in the Gewandhaus with great success, distinguishes itself principally by the exquisite rounding off of the form and the expert instrumentation. One remarks, not merely in the construction of the single passages, but also in the connection of the same, the skill with which the composer has performed his task. The brisk movement in C major is followed by the playful Scherzo in F major; then a Largo in F minor, whereupon the finale in C major concludes the whole in a brilliant and well contrasted manner. Fräulein Anna Mehlig, of Stuttgart, a well-known and popular pianist, brought Beethoven's E minor concerto, "*Traumgeswirren*" from Schumann's "*Fantasiestücke*," and Chopin's Scherzo in B minor. Her matchless performance of the concerto and her technical



acquirements did not fail to earn her applause and encores. The prelude to "*Tristan and Isolde*" is remarkable on account of the masterly instrumentation; but one seeks in vain for a resting-place amongst these complicated masses of tones. The orchestra, more especially in the prelude, was excellent.

The eighth Abonnement-Concert was chiefly remarkable for its pianoforte-playing and the excellent representation of every instrumental member. It appeared as if the orchestra, director and soloists were vying with each other for the palm of the evening. No doubt the short interval between the last two concerts, which arose from a "Busstag" (solemn day of prayer and repentance, on the eve of which no concerts may be held) falling on the 24th November, had proved beneficial to the hard-worked members of our orchestra. The two soloists on this occasion were Fräulein Mary Krebs and Signor Salvatore Marchesi, both well known to the musical world. The former, who lately returned to Dresden after her brilliant career in London, played Beethoven's concerto for piano (E flat major) with orchestra accompaniment. Her delivery of this colossal work bordered on the marvellous, and the brilliant execution she exhibited was received with bursts of applause from the largest audience that has been witnessed this season. Signor Marchesi, "Grand-Ducal Saxe-Weimar Kammer-sänger," as the programme announced, sang the Bass-air from Handel's "*Alexander-Fest*," "*Vendetta! Timotes esclama*"—and subsequently the two well-known airs of *Figaro*—"Aprite un po' quegli occhi"—and "*Non più audrai*"—from "*Les Noces de Figaro*," the latter air after the encores with which the audience greeted this excellent singer, had subsided.

A Leipzig paper writes "Everything appears finished in his singing; a splendid voice, excellent school and symmetrical, pearly finish, but above all the enrapturing vivacity of his delivery, which produces an irresistible effect on his hearers. Signor Marchesi's singing reminded us of Lablache and Tamburini in their prime. However inferior the Italians may be as composers, one fact is established; they have been and will remain our masters and models in singing."

The instrumental pieces consisted of Mendelssohn's Overture, "*A fair sea and happy voyage*," and Beethoven's Symphony, *Eroica*.—*Orchestra*.

COLOGNE.—Music flourishes well in Cologne. The third Gesellschafts-Concert, which took place lately, in the large room of the Gürzenich, under the direction, as usual, of Herr Ferdinand Hiller, was, according to the *Niederheinische Musik-Zeitung*, one of the most successful ever known. The following pieces constituted the programme: Part I.—1. N.W. Gade, overture, "*Im Hochland*." 2. Aria from *Fidelio*, Beethoven (Mlle. Therese Tietjens from London). 3. Servais, Fantasia for Violoncello (Herr Alexander Schmidt). 4. Aria from *Die Entführung aus dem Serail*, Mozart (Mlle. Therese Tietjens). 5. IV. Symphony, in B flat major, Beethoven.—Part II.—5. F. Hiller, "*Concert-Overture*," No. II. 7. F. Mendelssohn-Bartholdy, *Finale* to the opera of *Lorely* (Leonore, Mlle. Therese Tietjens).

The concert was a very fine one; the audience was in every respect satisfied, bestowing on every piece liberal applause, which began at once with Gade's Overture and increased with each successive number.

The star of the evening was Mlle. Therese Tietjens. The air she was announced in the bills to sing from Cherubini's *Medea*, we heard only at the rehearsal. At the concert itself, probably in conformity with the advice of musicians who knew the public, Leonore's grand air from *Fidelio* was substituted. This is certainly, for a first appearance, a far more thankful composition than Cherubini's *Andante* written in Gluck's style; the world of the present day has nearly lost all love for pure classical singing; it will no longer be entranced and delighted, calmly and mildly excited; it wants to be roused, shaken and jolted; it requires not merely emotion but, so to speak, commotion. The fair and celebrated singer, however, seeks and attains her peculiar greatness especially in classic style, that is in that style which is characterized by moderation, without which nothing truly artistic is possible; in that style which detests Realism as the ruin of artistic expression, because it degrades the ideal element of song to the mere screaming of nature; in that style which causes the soul to speak in tone, but which, even in the midst of the most violent inward agitation, never forgets that Art always demands the Beautiful. This classical type characterized in an extraordinary degree the execution by Mlle. Tietjens of the airs of Leonore and Constance, as well as the scene from *Lorely*.

The Second Part of the concert began with a composition written by Ferdinand Hiller during the last

few years, namely: his second "*Concert-Overture*," which, without programme or inscription, as the genial production of purely musical creative power, that does not need to trouble itself about outward things, excited the enthusiasm of the audience quite as much as, if not more than, it excited it four years ago, and caused the composer to be loudly applauded and more than once recalled.

The four members of the Parisian Quartet, MM. Maurin, Sabatier, Mas and Chevillard, lately gave a numerous attended concert in the rooms of the Hotel Disch. They played two of Beethoven's Quartets, Op. 59, No. 1, in F, and Op. 130, in B flat major. Between the Quartets, Herr Ferdinand Hiller performed one of his newest pianoforte compositions: "*Gavotte; Sarabande; Courante*" in an especially masterly fashion, and, for his execution as well as for the above cleverly written pieces, was uproariously applauded and repeatedly called on to bow his thanks. The "*Gavotte*" and the "*Courante*" more particularly are amazingly effective, but they require a fine performer. The playing of the Parisian artists was exhibited to the greatest perfection in their execution of the B flat major Quartet.—*London Mus. World*.

BREMEN. At the second so-called Private Concert, the programme included, besides Gade's Symphony, IV, B flat major, together with the overtures to *Coriolan* and *Oberon*, a highly interesting "*Divertimento*," by Mozart, for two violins, tenor, violoncello and two horns, Herr David from Leipzig taking the first violin part. The composition consists of six movements, Allegro; Andante con Variazioni; Menuetto; Adagio; Menuetto; and Rondo Allegro. Herr David played, also, his own Fantasia on a theme from Mozart, while Signor Salvatore Marchesi sang the air "*Vendetta*" from Handel's *Alexander's Feast*, and "*Aprite un po' gli occhi*" from *Le Nozze di Figaro*.

MUNICH. From the *Unterhaltungs-blatt* we translate part of a report of the third subscription concert of the Musical Academy, which took place in the Odeon, Nov. 27. It opened with a new orchestral Suite (the third) by Franz Lachner, to whom credit is given for having modernized this ancient form, so that it pleases the ear of this time almost as much as the Symphony. The work is praised in the highest degree, and is said to surpass in freshness and creative energy all that the composer has done before. "These Suites," says the critic, "are altogether the most significant instrumental works which the last decades have produced. Like no other contemporary, Lachner understands the instruments and knows how to work effects with their coloring, their character, in the noblest manner." The Suite (in F minor) has six movements: *Preludium, Intermezzo, Chaconne, Sarabande, Alla Gavotte, and Courante*. Mendelssohn's *Hebriden* overture formed the closing piece. The intervening numbers were an air from *Tell*, by Frl. Deinet, a Terzet from Spohr's *Zemire und Azor*, and a contribution by a young American pianist, known to most of our readers, of whom the German critic says:

"A rare guest figured on the programme this evening—Chopin, the little known in Munich. . . Herr Petersilea, of Boston, played the Andante and Rondo from his Concerto, op. 11. Musical conception, certainty and cleanness of play, a round, free, noble tone, tasteful delivery and great fluency are the chief excellencies of this young artist. He uses the pedal but seldom, and we know how to appreciate the moderate use of it, seeing how often it is made to cover up imperfect passages. His playing is more solid than brilliant,—also a great compliment for him. Let him add to these excellences a more powerful touch and a more marrowy tone, and the young artist will be able to compete successfully with the most renowned pianists."

#### London.

CRYSTAL PALACE. (From an article in the *London Times*):

We allude exclusively to the performances given Saturday after Saturday, with rare intervals, from October of one year, to April or May of the next, in the handsome, spacious, and now comfortably enclosed music-room facing the great Handel orchestra. The Saturday Concerts have advanced by slow de-

grees to their present position; but though their progress was gradual, it was not the less sure; and no step forward has ever been retraced.

A "*fanatico per la musica*"—"la musica classica," strictly speaking—with plenty of leisure at disposal, might do worse than take up his quarters at Sydenham during the winter and spring months. It is a long way hence to Leipzig; and it is, moreover, a question whether—inferiority in numerical force allowed for—the "*fanatico*" could not hear a symphony played with even greater spirit, accuracy and finish, by the Crystal Palace orchestra, under Herr Manns, than by the famous orchestra of the Gewandhaus, once directed by Mendelssohn, now by Herr Reinecke, one of the Mendelssohn shadows to be met with in almost every German city. At any rate, we are unable to recall more utterly irreproachable performances of the second and seventh symphonies of Beethoven, the symphonies in G minor and A minor of Mozart and Mendelssohn, than recently at the Crystal Palace, before audiences whose growing appreciation is satisfactory evidence of the benefit these concerts are conferring. Beethoven's Symphony in A (No. 7), is one of those works which too rarely go from one end to the other without some point or points open to criticism; but in the instance under notice, reading and execution were equally unassailable. Could Marie von Weber have listened to this clear, precise, and masterly performance, he would hardly have risen from it with the persuasion that the composer of the symphony was "ripe for a mad-house," at all events, not without incurring the risk of being declared by calmer and more impartial judges than himself, fit for the very asylum to which he was condemning Beethoven. Other symphonies have been produced—among them, that of Haydn in B flat, (No. 8), with the "*obbligato*" (not "*obligato*," as Herr Manns spells it), violin parts in the finale, and the seventh (in F) of Herr Niels Gade, whose "*No. 1*" (in C minor) elicited such an enthusiastic panegyric from Mendelssohn, but who, even in this last and perhaps his best considered work, can scarcely be said to have realized the hopes of that generous-minded patron.

In the way of overtures, Herr Manns has given Weber's "*Oberon*" and "*Der Freischütz*," Mendelssohn's "*Meeresstille*," Taubert's "*Tempest*," Gounod's "*Nonne Sanglante*," and Schumann's "*Braut von Messina*." Of the three first-named universally recognized models, it is unnecessary to say a word. Herr Wilhelm Taubert, one of the two conductors at the Royal Opera, Berlin, is about as plodding and about as dry a composer as his confederate Herr Dorn. *Arcades ambo!* Taubert, according to Herr Manns, "is a musical conservative," and, together with others, has helped to keep in check the "great extravagances of the seductive Wagner-Liszt doctrine." Though unable to understand the "seductive" nature of that particular doctrine, we cannot but think that half the influence it at one time seemed to be acquiring was due to the prevalence of laborious dullness, as exhibited in the writings of composers like Herren Taubert and Dorn, who, in their operas (*Macbeth* and "*Die Niebelungen*," for example—to name only two out of many,) have afforded convincing arguments to Herr Wagner & Co., that something new was absolutely wanting if not exactly what Herr Wagner & Co. were ready and willing to prescribe. The overture to "*The Tempest*," we are further advised by Herr Manns, "seems intended to portray the sorrowful meditations of the banished Duke of Milan and his final triumph over his enemies," Be it so. The overture to "*La Nonne Sanglante*," M. Gounod's second grand opera (brought out in Paris, October, 1854, by no means one of the most attractive works of that eminent composer, who has seldom been less happily inspired than while setting to music the dreariest libretto to which the market-name of Scribe was probably ever allied. Worthier consideration in all respects is the gloomy overture with which Robert Schumann endeavored to convey his impressions of the terrible play of Schiller. The overture to "*The Bride of Messina*" is as deeply imbued with the spirit of its composer as anything that came from his pen. It exhibits the same want of continuous developing power which adverse critics persist in laying to his charge, the same vagueness in the melodic outline of the themes, the same monotonous style of instrumentation. Nevertheless, it enchains attention by its intense earnestness from the first bar to the last, and not seldom rises to the height of impassioned expression. The subject was thoroughly congenial to the melancholy brooding mind of Schumann, whose intellectual aspiration, had it been sustained by richness of invention and technical skill in proportion, would have placed him in a certain sense nearer to Beethoven than perhaps any other composer—the more liberally gifted Schubert not excepted.

It is the want of plastic or creative power that chiefly stood in Schumann's way; and the profound

self-consciousness of that want imparts to music one of its most striking, if not most satisfying characteristics. Yet such a work as the overture to Schiller's tragedy must always be heard with more or less absorbing interest. It exhibits an "upward-striving" that proceeds from a great soul, and an abhorrence of commonplace which enlists the sympathies of all who cannot endure that Art should be desecrated to any trivial or unworthy end. As much cannot be said for the purely mechanical and colorless music of Herr Franz Lachner, from whose second *Suite*, in E minor, Herr Manns has brought forward specimens.

**SIGNOR ARDITI'S CONCERTS.** More than once he has given as many as four different overtures by four different masters on the same evening, and this in addition to other genuine attractions. Since we last noticed the concerts another genial specimen of the French Mèhul, the "Minstrel of Givet," has been brought forward in the shape of his overture to *Les deux Aveugles de Toledo*, which is quite Spanish in cast, and quite as characteristic as the *Chasse de Jeune Henri*—a favorite, it would appear, to judge by its frequent appearance in the bills. Then we have had two overtures to *Der Vampyr*, by Marschner and Lindpaintner, each of whom composed an opera under that name. Lindpaintner's is, perhaps, the better of the two, the influence of Weber being so potent with the late Hanoverian Kapellmeister as to lead occasionally (*Euryanthe* to wit) even to downright plagiarism. Both, however, were worth hearing. Another and a still better overture by Lindpaintner—to the ballet of *Joko le Singe de Brésil*, the overture to Spohr's early opera, *Pietro von Abano*; and most pleasant of all, Schubert's to *Rosamunde*—the last two all but unknown to London—have gratified admirers of the purely German school. Cherubini's overture *L'Hotelier Portugaise*—an opera composed in 1798 (for the Salle Favart), of which little but the prelude and a trio is now ever heard; and that to his *Lodoiska*, composed in 1791 (the year Mozart died), were equally interesting, as specimens of the illustrious Florentine, whose music, pronounced "too learned" by his countrymen, is, perhaps, though not nearly so well known as it deserves, better known anywhere than in Italy. Add to this already rich selection five overtures of Rossini, including the now rarely heard, but not the less charming, *Italiana in Algeri*—composed in 1813, the same year as *Tancredi* and *Aureliano in Palmira*; several of Auber's—not the least welcome being those to *Le Philtre*, (the libretto of which was afterwards appropriated by Donizetti for his *L'Elisir d'Amore*), and *Le Dieu et la Bayadere*; Mendelssohn's poetical dream of a *Calm Sea and Happy Voyage*; the overture to *Fernand Cortez*, the second grand opera composed by Spontini for Paris (produced in 1809, two years after *La Vestale* had made him famous); and the most popular dramatic preludes of Herold, Weber, &c.

## Dwight's Journal of Music.

BOSTON, JAN. 6, 1866.

### A Great Musical Week.

The Christmas holidays, this time, brought a remarkable quantity and variety of great music. In the eight days ending with the last night of the old year, the great year 1865, there could be heard in Boston three Oratorios, given on a grand scale; a Symphony Concert of the highest order of programme; Beethoven's Mass in C, with orchestra, (at the Church of the Immaculate Conception, under the direction of Mr. WILLCOX); and, in several Music Hall Organ Concerts, several of the grander Fugues of Bach and Sonatas of Mendelssohn. It was a period of real musical enthusiasm.

#### THE ORATORIOS.

The HANDEL AND HAYDN SOCIETY did well to avail themselves of the presence of Mme. PAREPA, to produce three Oratorios in better style, than they have been able to do since the Festival in May, and even better than then in point of leading solo artists. It was at an immense price that they purchased this advantage, the single services of the prima donna (cornet thrown in one night) weighing equal in the contract to all the attraction of the Oratorio itself, and all the means employed in its production, the chorus of five hundred, the orchestra, the organ, the conductor, and the other solo singers, one of whom,

at least, Miss PHILLIPS, would have been a host alone. Certainly such music with such rendering even without Parepa, would have drawn large and remunerative houses. But the Society found their advantage in the arrangement nevertheless; it enabled them to double prices, and the prestige of the one great name swelled the full house to a crowded one. The Society have no reason to complain of the result, and certainly Mr. Bateman has not. Mme. Parepa of course added greatly to the value of the concerts; but it were extravagant to suppose that she or any single singer could have doubled it.

1. "*Judas Maccabeus*." Saturday evening Dec. 22. A large, but not a crowded house. It was a very much better performance than that given in the autumn. The chorus was both larger and more carefully drilled. We felt no weakness this time in the contraltos, on the contrary a full, rich, solid volume of tone. And, though there is still often lack of instantaneous, bold and sure beginning all together in the taking up of points, nearly all the choruses (so far as we could judge from a position too near and against one wing of the vocal mass) went both with spirit and precision. Of the character of these choruses, their heroic vein, their beauty and grandeur, each one of Handel's happy inspirations, each so individual, we have spoken before. There was no dulness from beginning to end; they kept the listeners in a buoyant mood.

It was just the music for PAREPA. Her recitative was splendid, simply eloquent, clear, large. The air "From mighty Kings" was made for such a singer, one who has so much voice, so bright and clear, so flexible, so perfectly schooled to equal, easy execution, so never failing in breath and never reminding you of labor there, so true, so musical. A hearty, honest, large, brilliant, nobly sustained style of singing is what this music demanded, and all this she has. But, demanding no more, it opened a temptation even to so great an artist to step over into the region of *bravura* now and then; to seize now and then an opportunity to introduce a high note because it was a good one in her voice, and in one or two other ways to modify the text of Handel. This, as placing the singer's self first, is objectionable.

In the lovely duets about "Liberty" and "Peace," her voice blended expressively with the rich and beautiful contralto of Miss ANNIE CARY, whose lower tones are of a purer and more refined quality than Parepa's (the latter's voice, though still strong, losing its characteristic beauty down there).

The quiet, even charm of Miss Cary's singing is so agreeable, so musical, that we can hardly complain of a certain lack of animation in her manner.—Mr. RUDOLPHSEN's recitative: "I feel the Deity within" was excellent, as well as the air following: "Arm, arm, ye brave." In chaste, solid, manly oratorio style the Society never improve upon him in their choice of a Basso.—Mr. CASTLE was a great improvement upon the last Tencr; in point of voice especially; for, though it seems rather of a light, elastic quality, it is strong and has a good deal of reach, while it is musical and sympathetic. He surprised us by the manly vigor with which he sang "Sound an alarm!" There was plenty of "silver trumpet" in it. But in his general style he is far from showing a true oratorio education; the habits of English opera and ballad singing, and the applause of unmusical publics, were too manifest in bad accentuation and pronunciation, unrefined cadenzas, &c. With right serious study Mr. Castle may become an excellent oratorio singer. In point of style, of well-conceived, consistent rendering of his music, Mr. SOMES, in the small parts allotted to him, pleased us more than Mr. Castle.

"The Messiah," on Christmas Eve, drew an enormous audience; every seat in the hall had been sold several days before the concert, and extra seats were

inserted wherever a few feet of room could be found.

The *Messiah* is known and loved by all, and with many all over New England it has become part of the religious observance of Christmas to attend the annual performance by the Handel and Haydn Society, a custom now of half a century. To the student of such music, who has heard it all his lifetime, while his conviction of its greatness never lessens, it can hardly have the fresh attraction of some only less great works more seldom heard, unless there be some remarkable inspiration or perfection in the execution. The grand choruses are what wear the best, for there the miracle lies wholly in the music. The songs are marvellously beautiful, significant and deep; but more and more they call for singers of the highest stamp, singers who combine all technical accomplishment with soul, imagination, inspiration. It was a great thing to hear Jenny Lind sing "I know that my Redeemer liveth;" scarcely has the announcement of the sublime air been tempting to us since, though we have often heard it given in a manner that exacted large credit. Mme. PAREPA, as we have before intimated and have heard many others own, with all her generous, noble attributes of song, with her easy supremacy in nearly all that constitutes the singer's art, with her infallible routine of excellence, is not particularly a sympathetic singer, and never seems to us to sing out of a very deep nature. In this song the tones, phrases, passages were not to our sense transfigured by fine inspirations (altered they were sometimes, slightly, but that was an outward change, and questionable). It was a fine display of voice and vocal art, with just conception and good taste; but not for one instant did the touch of genius and imagination transport us beyond thought of the singer and the scene. This power we have all felt in less accomplished artists than Parepa, to say nothing of greater ones, like Lind, Sontag, Bosio, Tietjens, &c. And even on the score of taste, if the listener was raised to rapture by the song, was he not dashed to earth again by the gratuitous alteration (not inspired, but literal) at the closing cadence? "Rejoice greatly," free, bright, graceful as it was, has more rejoiced us before now. The recitative: "There were shepherds" was indeed resplendent, and sent a pure and pleasing thrill through every heart; the voice and style were worthy of the theme. And on the whole, as compared with any but the very few greatest, this lady's rendering of the soprano solos in the *Messiah* was a memorable experience.

In the sympathetic quality, depth of feeling, warmth and fulness of expression, Miss ADELAIDE PHILLIPS came the nearest to her audience in her artistic and true womanly singing of the contralto airs, especially in "He was despised." She seemed not, however, to have her full strength and richness of voice; it was a little hollow, and the breath difficult,—owing doubtless (as *Elijah* afterwards proved) to a cold. Mr. CASTLE pleased us more generally in the *Messiah* than in *Judas*; probably because he had had more study of the music. Still there were the same faults of style and vanities of self-indulgent humoring of the text. He was remarkably successful in the terribly tasking air: "Thou shalt break them with a rod of iron,"—far more so than in passages like: "Thy rebuke."—Mr. M. W. WHITNEY has a noble voice and made on the whole an excellent impression. In the "Trumpet" air, Mr. LEVY's accompaniment came in for its large share of applause. The chorus singing for the most part should rank with the best memories of the old Society; some of those "kinky" choruses, so thick-set with short answering phrases, sounded unusually clear. The solemn Quartets in the last part, alternating with chorus, sung by such voices, were exceedingly impressive.

"*Elijah*" (Saturday, last night of the year) packed the great hall even fuller than the *Messiah*; besides, extra seats, there seemed to be hundreds standing.



Such conditions are not the most favorable for real sincere, musical enjoyment of any music, and herein one often finds two elements in conflict; successes which astonish the *guidones*, which are good sensational material for newspapers, and at which managers rub their hands with glee, often offer but delusive opportunities for real intrinsic musical enjoyment; the external occasion is too overshadowing (not to speak of all the restless fidget of the crowd) and breaks the inward spell, in some sort paralyzes the mind's receptivity of fine tone influences. "Fit audience, though few" is what nothing needs so much as music. But, whether with the crowd or in spite of the crowd, it was a great performance of *Elijah*, the greatest yet heard in America. We could not resist the feeling that it was so, although we were again seated where we could not always feel sure whether we heard or only imagined some parts of the chorus beside the soprano. The ensemble was certainly spirited, sonorous, massive and euphonious. The vast musical pictures were all vivid, unmistakable, the back-ground and perspective admirable. The "Rain" Chorus flooded all before it, and the crowd seemed almost set upon a repetition. One only missed the noble orchestra of the May festival, but even the orchestra was larger than usual and quite effective (save that downward plunge, cascade, of violins, which we could wish the rain to have swollen to greater volume). To our sense, too, some of the choruses were a little too fast, while on the other hand the tempo of some of the solos dragged.

Mme. PAREPA was perfectly at home in the great soprano passages. They suited her voice admirably, and more than before she seemed to lose herself (the true way of being at home) in the music and dramatic situation. In the "Youth's" part of the dialogue before the rain, the voice and style were youth and purity itself; and in the sublime ascription: "Holy, holy!" the effect was all one could desire. The part of the widow, the air "Hear ye Israel," and indeed all parts were admirable, true to the text and to the feeling. Miss PHILLIPS never more commended herself than in the airs: "Woe unto thee" and "O rest in the Lord" (albeit the latter was a little slow). The glorious richness and roundness of her voice had all returned; her art is now so perfect that you perceive nothing of that thickness of utterance which clung to her so long as a physical obstacle; while in chaste expression and feeling (not, as sometimes, of the overdone, Italian opera sort) she won the finer sympathy of all her audience. Miss HOUSTON, who has fine inspirations sometimes, and always a right earnest musical enthusiasm and fine voice, won no mean recognition in the secondary soprano parts; and the Angel Trio by these three large voices was uncommonly satisfactory. Mr. CAMPBELL in voice and presence is larger, richer, more commanding than Mr. Rudolphsen, but in style much inferior, though some of his renderings made a very good impression. His musical schooling and associations have been of the same character with Mr. CASTLE's, whose rendering of the tenor pieces was what we might have expected, pains-taking and in some sense highly successful. The Quartet, and especially the Double Quartet, sounded remarkably well.

We believe the whole audience went home delighted, grateful to the Handel and Haydn Society and its indefatigable conductor, its organist, chorus, orchestra, particularly grateful to Mme. Parepa and Miss Phillips, and to all who had so successfully ministered to so high a pleasure. That week's experience certainly developed a great deal of true musical enthusiasm.—The Society will not relax its efforts, but proceed immediately to the study of Mendelssohn's "St. Paul."

#### FIRST SYMPHONY CONCERT.

The first orchestral concert under the management of a committee of the Harvard Musical Association, last Thursday afternoon, proved a signal vindication of the plan. By all witnesses, and in the best sense, it has been pronounced a success. The audience was precisely of the character which it was sought to bring together, and even more numerous than had

been at first expected (though far from a crowd); so that financially the six concerts are now fully guaranteed, without any compromise of dignity or purity of programme, and it is plain that what has been done once can be done again. We never have known a more delightful audience, one so sympathetic, so refined in tone, such earnest listeners (through a long Concerto or Symphony you could almost hear the clock tick); in short, all the influences in the room were harmonious and encouraging, the sphere was musical. And we have never known a more delighted audience, or such general voice of approval, showing that it is possible to interest and charm a large audience for two hours with the best kind of music, without the least admixture of ought but the best. For this was the programme:

1. Overture to "Euryanthe,".....Weber.
2. Violin Concerto, in E minor.....Mendelssohn.  
Allegro appassionato—Andante—Allegro vivace.  
Herr Carl Rosa.

3. Chaconne, for Violin.....Bach.  
(With Mendelssohn's Piano-forte Accompaniment.)  
Herr Carl Rosa.

4. Symphony, in G minor.....Mozart.  
Allegro—Andante—Minuetto—Finale.

5. Violin Solos:  
a) Schumann's "Abendlied," arranged by Joachim.  
b) Hungarian Air,.....Ferd. David.  
c) "Am Springquell,".....Ferd. David.

6. Overture: "Leonore" No. 3.....Beethoven.

The orchestra numbered fifty instruments, with larger proportion of strings than has been usual in Boston (viz. 8 first violins, 8 second, 8 violas, 5 violoncellos, 4 and part of the time 5 double basses), while there were the usual pairs of wind instruments, with an excellent first bassoon for a wonder, and four horns. Strong hopes, even a positive promise at one time, had emboldened the Committee to expect an addition of six or eight more strings; but the men could not be had this time; there is reason to expect, however, that this department of the orchestra will grow from concert to concert. As it was, the fifty filled the ear well and the soul better; the fine intonations were well caught and realized.

It was evident that Mr. ZERRAHN had made the work of rehearsal critical and careful as far as time allowed, and that the musicians had caught the spirit of the enterprise and felt the dignity and interest of their calling as they cannot do in miscellaneous *ad captandum* concerts. Drudging in theatres, in bands, in balls, or giving lessons, most of our musicians find most of their employment somewhat benumbing and demoralizing to the artistic tone and temper. But here was an opportunity of the right kind, here they stood once more grouped within a sweet spot of Art's sunshine; old ideals warmed again. It is the aim of these concerts to furnish such opportunities, such inspirations for the musicians, to give them their nobler work to do, such as they certainly will most delight in, and on the other hand to ensure them just the audience which pure programmes and a sincere artistic tone, and no other, can unite their best efforts.

At first the very temperate response to the *Euryanthe* overture a little damped our courage. For it is a most brilliant, genial overture, and was brilliantly and nicely played. But it is somewhat unfamiliar here. The opening and closing *tutti* are full of *brío* and enthusiasm, quickening and strong; then there are lovely bits of "cello, horn, bassoon and clarinet color, absorbing little episodes; and then a delicious reverie of violins and violas *pianissimo* divided into four-part harmony, as breezy and mysterious as the whisper of the pines. The *fugato* movement which then sets in is weak and aimless; Weber is not at home in that style of music; but how gloriously he gets out of the woods at last and is himself again! Perhaps the want of an unbroken climax in the whole progress of the composition, the cutting of the overture in two, as it were, by that violin episode, allows the attention of the general audience to drop away. Yet we believe it was enjoyed more generally and deeply than appeared; and still attention is better evidence than loud applause.

The G-minor Symphony of Mozart we cannot remember to have heard so nicely rendered in this city; there was an attention to minutiae, to lights and shades, unusual for us. The Andante and the Minuet (especially the fascinating Trio) were very clear and happy in the rendering. The first movement came nearer to the idea than ever before, but it seemed a little hurried, because some of the little answering phrases of single instruments did not flow in easily and unobtrusively enough; it is very difficult; and this Symphony is a very master-piece of art and genius, to be refined upon forever in rehearsal. The finale was really too rapid; it seemed as if the violins were bent on running away from the conductor. Mind, we are trying all we can to find fault; it is our duty now, if not before.

Let us reserve *Leonore* till we have talked of Rosa. The young violinist covered himself with glory and held his audience through two long solos and three

little pieces in unalloyed delight and wonder. In the highest artistic sense, on the poetic side as well as the technical, never have we heard such admirable violin-playing in this city. If this young man of twenty-one is not already, he surely will be a great artist. It is in the rare beauty and searching sweetness of his tone; it is in his manly, graceful bowing, his clear, perfect phrasing, his light and shade and subordination of finished details to a harmonious whole. It is in the poetic temper of his playing, in the clearly poetic nature of the man, in his quick, clear, just conception of the music; in the sincere way in which that music fills him to the forgetting of himself; it is in his modesty, his fresh, ingenuous, unspoiled, natural behavior. He had the confidence and deep interest of his audience immediately, and he went on strengthening the hold to the end, though he played more than many a prudent self-seeking soloist would dare to play to any audience at one time. The Concerto by Mendelssohn and the *Chaconne* by Bach are perhaps the two greatest solos ever written for the violin; only Beethoven's Concerto can stand in the same great company. In the Concerto the tone seemed perhaps a little thin and the expression timid at the outset (such a vast hall!), but tone and player warmed as it went on; the Andante held the ravished listener in breathless silence; and for the first time here was the whole of that very long Concerto devoured without a falling off of appetite.

The *Chaconne* was a still more extraordinary performance; for there full polyphonic harmony is carried on by the single instrument through a long development of pregnant thoughts, with episodes and variations that anticipate many of the modern effects. It was played superbly, with a masterly grasp, and interested as such things seldom can in such a place. The interest was much enhanced by Mr. DRESEL's tasteful and masterly playing of the piano part set to it by Mendelssohn. Artist-like, he is always modestly ready and happy for such good service; not eager to figure in announcements, preferring probably (as a neighbor of ours wittily suggested) to remain *sub Rosa*.

The three little pieces were charmingly grouped and very choice; Schumann's "Evening Song," as arranged by Joachim, with piano accompaniment, was altogether lovely, full of finest feeling, very short, but long to be remembered. Joachim has also set a remarkable orchestral accompaniment to it, which was to have been played on this occasion; but the parts, having been procured from New York, at once mysteriously vanished! nor could they be replaced in season. Rosa played all by heart!

Then came the glorious finale, the *Leonore* Overture, and great was the delight of the audience to see Carl Rosa, after all his efforts, slip into the orchestra amongst the violins and play because he could not help it. It was an important reinforcement in that peculiar piece, so full of violinity, and eked out the great violin *crescendo* not a little. The overture went inspiringly, and the company dispersed reluctantly, not having known a dull instant during those two hours.

The second concert, announced for the 18th, is unavoidably postponed to the 25th, on account of other engagements of the Music Hall; but the third will probably follow at a fortnight's interval, regaining the time lost. The next programme will consist largely of Beethoven: (*Coriolanus* overture, E flat Concerto, played by Otto Dresel, and 4th Symphony). A chorus of some 80 male voices will sing from Mendelssohn's *Antigone*, and smaller things with horn accompaniments, and the *Melusine* overture will close the feast.

We have yet to speak of the Organ performances of Mr. PEARCE, from Philadelphia, and of the delightful private concert of Mr. PARKER's singing club.

NEXT IN ORDER (to-night) comes the fifth and last of the choice soirées of Messrs. KREISSMANN and LEONHARD. The former will sing one of the Bach arias and several Schubert and Franz songs, and the latter will play, among other nice things, Beethoven's *Sonata Appassionata*.

Next Wednesday the ORCHESTRAL UNION will recommence their popular and charming Afternoon Concerts. They promise even better things than heretofore, and these will be the opportunities to hear new works.

CARLYLE PETERSILEA. By our summary of Music Abroad, under the head of Munich, it will be seen that this young Boston pianist has distinguished himself by playing in one of the best concerts of that German city. After several earnest years in Leipzig, he has now placed himself under the tuition of Liszt's son-in-law, Hans von Buelow, one of the most remarkable musicians of the age.

## Musical Correspondence.

NEW YORK, JANUARY 2, 1866.—If we regard the scarcely yet past holiday season with the eye of a musician who discourses of public musical celebrations, we find it to have been deficient in interest; but, looking at the time from a broader standpoint, we must pronounce it one of the most significant, and universally observed seasons of rejoicing that it has ever been our good fortune to participate in. The feelings of relief, of elastic hope in the future, of restored confidence in the mission of this nation as leader of the future unity and freedom of mankind, all those feelings, which have pervaded the community for some months, seem to have found a glad and welcome expression in the peaceful, social merry-makings, the generous gifts and charities of the Christmas and New Year holidays. The very faces of the crowds passing in the thoroughfares have worn a common look of expansive and sympathetic pleasure; reminding us again how closely the destiny of individuals is connected with that of the race—as when the body of Mr. Lincoln passed through our streets, a universal expression of regret and reverence was visible in the faces of the people, and to a degree that struck foreigners especially with wonder; not that they were astonished that regret and reverence should be there; but the sympathetic brotherhood in joy or sorrow of a nation free to work its own good or evil is never met with outside of a republic.

It is to be regretted that the Peace Christmas has passed away from New York without a fitting musical celebration; but perhaps, considering the relations which the members of the musical profession here bear to each other, unless belonging to the same clique, as it is called, such a demonstration would have been difficult, to say the least. Service was performed on Christmas day, in the churches of the different religious denominations, accompanied by music of more or less merit; the Harmonic Society gave its fourteenth annual performance of Handel's "Messiah" in the hall of the Cooper Institute; and the band of the Seventh Regiment, assisted by some resident artists, gave a concert at the Academy of Music in the evening. The latter was unsuccessful in point of attendance, and does not call for any special remark.

The performance of the "Messiah" was attended by nearly three thousand persons; two thousand tickets were sold, and taking into consideration, besides, the known generosity of the society in the presentation of tickets to its friends, it will be seen that the capacities of the Cooper auditorium were fairly tested. The singing of the soloists, Misses BRAINARD and HUTCHINGS, Messrs. GEARY and CAMPBELL, was satisfactorily on the whole; and the choral performances showed an advance in precision and expression, upon those of last year. To make any comparison between the performances of this and the oratorio societies of England and Germany, would be simply absurd; for where they number their members by thousands sometimes, the Harmonic, our largest society, counts at present only between two and three hundred singing members! With such small means, and only one, and that a partial orchestral rehearsal, Mr. F. L. RITTER, the conductor of the society, deserves the highest credit for having obtained even so satisfactory a performance. When Mr. Ritter undertook the conductorship of this society, two years ago, it claimed only forty singers! and was encumbered by debt. These encumbrances are now happily cleared away, while, attracted by Mr. Ritter's disinterested enthusiasm and energy in the cause of the highest in art, new members are constantly joining the society, from among our best amateurs and church singers, and there is now really hope of a future for Oratorio here.

It is Mr. Ritter's intention to bring out Handel's "Samson" in the beginning of February, to be followed by Haydn's "Creation," a Cantata of Bach,

that has never been heard here, and a miscellaneous selection from the works of the old church composers, besides parts of a Mass, written by one of our most eminent resident musicians. One great disadvantage to the performance of the "Messiah" was the fact of its taking place in a hall, so low-roofed, and deficient in acoustic advantages, as that of the Cooper Institute. New York sadly needs a large music hall; the Academy is unfit for other than operatic performances, and Irving Hall seems to be almost monopolized by social gatherings, balls, &c., this season; while Dodworth's Hall, the headquarters of classic chamber concerts, is too small. The new hall of the Messrs. Steinway, which is to be ready next year, and will contain an organ, will partly remedy this long felt want. The question of a large and well ventilated music hall, of superior architectural pretensions, and containing an ample organ, is agitated among some of our wealthy music lovers, who have seen that the existence of such a hall, unburdened by debt, and apart from managerial influence or private views, is a necessity to the advancement of pure art among us. Let us hope that this plan will not sleep, as that of a National Conservatory has so far done.

The programme for the season of Quartette Soirées, to commence early this month, under the leadership of Messrs. MASON and THOMAS, as usual, is, also as usual, promising and attractive to all lovers of this refined class of compositions. At the next Philharmonic concert, we are to have Berlioz's fantastic symphony, "An episode in the life of an artist," and Mr. Thomas promises us a new symphony by Bargiel, at his next Symphony Soirée.

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HARTFORD, CONN., JAN. 2.—The performance of the *Messiah* in so many cities about Christmas time shows how deeply rooted this sublime Oratorio is in the affections of the people. Its freshness is perennial, growing instead of withering with age. Every year it attracts greater and greater multitudes, and is listened to with deeper veneration and more exalted enthusiasm.

The performance of this work in Hartford is entitled to especial notice. The Beethoven Society (at the expense of nine hundred dollars) secured through Mr. Bateman the services of the magnificent PAREPA for the soprano solos. How splendidly she performed her task I need not say, for you have heard her in Boston. The audience (which filled every nook and corner of the Hall, at tickets two dollars and one dollar and a half "according to location") were in raptures and thoroughly enjoyed her grand voice and style of singing.

"Rejoice greatly" was especially beautiful, as jubilant in expression, as brilliant in execution. "Come unto me" was enthusiastically encored. Dr. GUILMETTE sang the bass solos. He was in grand voice and entered into the composer's meaning with all his great energies and vigorous style of singing. A beautiful young voice, Miss FRANKAN, a pupil of Mr. Barnett, sang finely the mezzo soprano part. Mrs. RISLY was the Alto, and Mr. PATTON, a French gentleman, sang the tenor part. He is a singer of much culture and experience. His voice is well adapted to this important and heavy style of music.

The Orchestra, mainly selected from the best musicians in Boston, performed their part admirably as usual. The Chorus singing of this Society reflects great honor not only on themselves but on their able conductor, Mr. BARNETT. They number about one hundred and forty voices. In purity of tone, the finest gradations of sound, delicacy and variety of effect they are admirable. They sing as one voice, they seem to be all moved by one impulse, all animated by one soul.

The labors of Mr. Barnett have been invaluable. His great ability as a musician, teacher and leader has gained him an eminent position in his profession; and the influence thence arising has been uniformly used in teaching his pupils and those he has under him, to understand and love the noblest works of the greatest masters.

The members of this excellent Society must be gratified to find their zeal and perseverance appreciated by the public. The "Beethoven" is growing in magnitude, and (if it is not so already) will soon become one of the most important musical institutions in the country.

## Special Notices.

### DESCRIPTIVE LIST OF THE LATEST MUSIC, Published by Oliver Ditson & Co.

#### Vocal, with Piano Accompaniment.

- I know not why I love thee. Ballad. *G. Gustave Fitze.* 30  
A fine, melodious song, well put together.  
The bird that came in Spring. Song. *Jules Benedict.* 40  
Describes the wild lay of the bird who preceded the leaves and flowers, has pretty cadenzas and bird songs in it, and is quite pleasing throughout.  
Nightfall at sea. Reverie. *Virgini Gabriel.* 30  
The words are by Arthur Mathison, and are quite melodious. A very pure and sweet song.  
Slumber song. (Schlummerlied.) Song. *R. Franz.* 40  
Very sweet and slumberous.

- Lady of the Lea. Sung by Parepa. Song. *H. Smart.* 40  
I will not ask to press her cheek. *V. Gabriel.* 30  
Two very "satisfying" songs, which impress you with the idea that the composers thoroughly understand their business, and are up to the classical standard.

- November Rain. Song. *Minnie A. Cole.* 50  
A little gem of a poem, with pretty music, rendering the pattering of the cold rain on the window pane almost audible.

- The Candy Shop. Sung by the Buckleys. 40  
Nerves. Comic song. *T. Gordon.* 30  
Designed to raise a laugh, which the girl "without a nerve," and the other with the sweetest of trades may well do. Good music.

- How fondly I think. Song and Chorus. *J. W. Webster.* 30  
Call me thine own. Song. For Guitar. *Bishop.* 30

#### Instrumental.

- Felina Redowa. Four hands. *A. Talery.* 40  
A lively dance, neatly arranged by G. W. Hewitt. It has three pages for each player, which is a good length for an agreeable duet. Easy.  
Derniere pensee musicale. (Last musical thought of Meyerbeer.) Prelude in the 5th Act of "L'Africaine." 25  
As one of the last strains in the opera, the title is appropriate. It belongs to the celebrated "Mance-nillier" scene, and has gained the special distinction (for an instrumental piece) of drawing out a round of applause.

- "Les Hussards." Quadrille militaire. *C. A. White.* 60  
Has an engraving, prettily illustrating a figure in the dance, on the title page.

- A voice in the night. (Une voix dans la nuit.) Melodie for piano. *A. Croisez.* 40  
Of medium difficulty, and Nocturne style.  
Wearing of the Green. Transcribed for Piano. *A. Baumbach.* 50

#### Books.

- THE SINGER'S MANUAL. *W. Williams.* \$1.00  
A church music book is not always just the thing for a singing school, and the Manual supplies a want that is a real one. It contains Lessons, Glee, Anthems and tunes in abundance.  
LIBRETTOS OF "L'Africaine," and "Crispino e la Conare." Each 30  
The opera is coming, so hasten to get these librettos, and study the plots thoroughly, humming over, meanwhile, the favorite airs which are inserted. Your enjoyment of the performance will be much enhanced.

MUSIC BY MAIL.—Music is sent by mail, the expense being two cents for every four ounces, or fraction thereof. Persons at a distance will find the conveyance a saving of time and expense in obtaining supplies. Books can also be sent at double these rates.



